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# EDUCA

***Business Leaders Promote Basic  
Education and Educational Reform in  
the Dominican Republic***

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## ***Business Leaders Promote Basic Education and Educational Reform in the Dominican Republic***

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for USAID/Dominican Republic  
under contract to Creative Associates International, Inc.  
Contract Number: 517-0-00-98-00062-00

October 1998

Editor & Project Manager: Cammy Moore



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## **INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS FROM THE AUTHORS**

*Increasingly, educators and individuals interested in education policy reform are recognizing that, for reform to be effective and lasting, civil society must play a role in both crafting key reforms and in guiding their implementation. In the ideal world, government teams up with representatives from civil society<sup>1</sup> and donors to develop a policy framework that identifies the critical problems confronting the education system in a given country and the steps that must be taken at the policy, institutional, and school/community levels to address these problems.*

*Civil society – one part of which includes business groups – contributes throughout the process in many ways: in helping to identify the most significant problems and in finding solutions; in assisting to craft and then guide the implementation of policies; in providing (in close coordination with government) for delivery of crucial services; in helping to establish and ensure the implementation of quality standards.*

*This is a study of one instance, in the Dominican Republic, where a segment of civil society – a group of prominent business leaders who chose to call themselves “EDUCA” – helped to play a key role in the overall policy reform process. They began in 1989 by encouraging the Dominican government to agree to undertake some important reforms of the education system. In the early 1990s, they teamed up with other civil society groups and with the government to undertake an extensive process of consultation that culminated in a Ten-Year Plan (Plan Decenal) for education in the Dominican Republic. A new General Education Law was drafted based on several of the recommendations from the Plan Decenal. EDUCA also played a significant role during this period in raising consciousness among the Dominican populace of the importance of basic education, and in putting basic education on the national agenda.*

*Now that the new General Education Law has been approved, EDUCA should decide what kind of role it will play in facilitating the Law’s implementation. Early indications are that EDUCA plans, as it did with the national consultation in the early 1990s, to work in close concert with other civil society groups and the Ministry of Education to carry out this reform process.*

*The EDUCA story, told in the following pages, is based on an external evaluation of EDUCA conducted in June of 1997 under contract to the*

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<sup>1</sup> Civil society includes, among others, non-government organizations (NGOs), private business groups, teachers’ unions, professional associations, higher education associations, service clubs, and grass roots community and parents groups.

*USAID mission in the Dominican Republic. The information included in the evaluation, (subsequently updated in June of 1998 during another visit to the Dominican Republic) provides insights on how EDUCA was born in the late 1980's, what it has accomplished, and where – as of the drafting of this document – EDUCA seems to be headed. Were we to wait another six months or a year to conduct this study, the EDUCA story would be different.*

*The last section of this report contains the lessons learned from the EDUCA experience that have implications for business persons and civil society groups in other countries that would like to participate actively in the educational reform process.*

*Marcia Bernbaum  
Uli Locher  
October 1998*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1988, a group of prominent business leaders in the Dominican Republic who had been supporting vocational and higher education for over 20 years came to an important conclusion. If their businesses were going to prosper and if there was to be democracy and stability in their country, something had to be done to encourage the government to place more emphasis on basic education. Investment in education was at an all-time low (less than 1% of GDP and less than 10% of the government budget). The Dominican Republic was not competitive with other countries in the region in terms of basic indicators of primary completion and achievement. Teachers, who were earning less than domestic workers, were demoralized.

An informal consultation with teachers, the teachers' union, officials from the Ministry of Education, and prominent educators in the Dominican Republic served to confirm that the problem was even more serious than these business leaders had thought. In early 1989, this group formally constituted itself as a non-profit organization called EDUCA (Acción por la Educación Básica, Inc.) whose goal was to address problems in financing and quality of basic education in the Dominican Republic.

EDUCA was inspired by a group called Plan Educativo that, between 1988 and 1990, went through a comprehensive exploratory process to further understand and address constraints in the Dominican education sector. Similarly motivated by the worldwide *Education for All* conference that took place in Jomtien, Thailand in March of 1990, EDUCA joined forces in late 1990 with the Ministry of Education, the Dominican teachers' union, Plan Educativo, and the UNDP to carry out a nationwide consultation on the Dominican education system. This consultation led, in late 1992, to a Ten-Year Plan (Plan Decenal) that recommended sweeping changes to the Dominican education system.

The most critical recommendations included in the Plan Decenal – focusing on increasing financing for education, improving quality, decentralization of education services, and increased parental/community involvement in education – became the basis for a new General Education Law which, after some delay, was approved by the Dominican Congress in 1997. A \$100 million education loan from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the European Union

was approved in 1997 to assist the Dominican Ministry of Education to implement the recommendations of the General Education Law.

In addition to playing a key role in supporting the Plan Decenal process, EDUCA also implemented a program with funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to provide basic services<sup>2</sup> in low-income schools in Santo Domingo. This program acted as a stopgap measure to address serious quality constraints in the education system.

### *EDUCA's Accomplishments*

- EDUCA has focused on the basic education system in general as opposed to just a small segment that might be within its own particular interest – private sector education. With USAID support, EDUCA has provided critical basic education services to low-income areas in Santo Domingo and elsewhere, thus permitting it to foster a positive image among key sectors of the Dominican population.
- EDUCA's board of directors is made up of a group of Dominican business people who are seen as non-partisan and who enjoy a high level of credibility. EDUCA continues to attract fresh leadership to its board of directors. In addition, EDUCA has been able to attract several highly respected educators, academics, and others to serve in an advisory capacity to the board.
- Rather than operating on its own, EDUCA has chosen to serve as a catalyst that has established strategic alliances with other key actors in the education sector, including the Ministry of Education. It has done this both in its support for the Plan Decenal and in implementing a very effective program to train primary school directors and teachers. In some situations EDUCA has taken the lead, in others it has taken a backseat.
- Instead of developing its own in-house capability to deliver services, EDUCA has contracted with other Dominican institutions. In so doing, it has reduced its administrative burden, helped build the capacity of other Dominican organizations (especially the universities) in specific areas, and gained allies among the groups with which it has collaborated.

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<sup>2</sup> This program, carried out between 1991 and 1997, provided textbooks as well as teacher and director training)



## *EDUCA's Challenges*

- EDUCA's greatest challenge is adapting to outside change. The challenge is no longer putting education on the national agenda, as was the case when EDUCA was born in 1989. The current challenge is to ensure that the most critical recommendations in the Plan Decenal and the General Education Law are implemented. EDUCA has decided to make its top priority to serve as a catalyst in working with civil society and government to ensure implementation of education reforms. The group is presently honing its strategy for how it will accomplish this.
- EDUCA needs to carefully consider which activities it will support in the area of service delivery that complement its advocacy thrust. Maintaining its involvement in service delivery is important for EDUCA's credibility, but the service delivery functions it provides should ideally support its reform agenda and not distract the organization with lesser priority activities that are time-consuming to oversee. EDUCA's thinking, as of the drafting of this study, is to concentrate its education service delivery activities on developing models that address important challenges of the Dominican Republic's under-served population.
- Finally, EDUCA's financial sustainability remains an issue. While EDUCA has been able to mobilize funding from the Dominican private sector for a number of its advocacy activities, it no longer operates under a large grant from USAID, which has supported its service delivery activities. EDUCA must decide how much funding is required to cover its activities over the coming years and come up with a strategy for obtaining this funding on an ongoing basis.

## *Lessons Learned from the EDUCA Experience for Other Civil Society and Business Groups that Wish to Play a Role in Guiding Education Policy Reform*

- Groups such as EDUCA should be prepared to deal with or take advantage of circumstances as they arise – for example, a serious crisis that must be addressed, an opportunity presented by a new government. They need to step in and take a proactive role in helping to define as well as guide the reform process.

- The value-added of EDUCA and similar groups resides in the credibility of its membership, its ability to open doors through its members' multiple contacts, and its ability to be seen as a non-partisan organization.
- If the organization has an interest in advocating for policy reform, it must act strategically. The organization's programmatic focus, the composition of its board of directors, the characteristics of its advisory committee, and the characteristics of its executive director will by necessity have to flow from the nature of the policy reform role that the organization decides to take.
- Strength and influence come from unity. To be effective, organizations such as EDUCA must establish strategic alliances with education ministries, teachers' unions, and other civil society organizations striving toward the same goals. As appropriate – and depending on the circumstances – organizations such as EDUCA should serve as convener, facilitator, and mobilizer. Such organizations – again depending on the circumstances – must also be prepared to take either a prominent leadership role or one that is low-key and behind-the-scenes.
- Maintain freedom of action. While keeping good working relationships with ministries of education is important, there may be times when organizations such as EDUCA have to push from the outside to ensure the implementation of important reforms.
- Look for ways to complement and build on the strengths of others. At all costs, avoid entering into unnecessary competition with other groups that could be helpful as allies.
- Keep an eye on the target; do not deviate with side interests and opportunities that don't fit within the organization's objectives. If the organization swerves, it should do so consciously and without losing focus.
- If an organization is composed primarily of business people, examine the benefits for the business sector as a whole and for business people in particular. Recognize that there will be (and probably should be) an element of vested self-interest. Examine what business people have to offer to the organization and build on and around their strengths.

- Focus, from the beginning, on financial sustainability. Organizations such as EDUCA need to keep their independence to play an effective role in advocacy for reform. A critical consideration to this end is having a diversified funding base, a significant amount of which comes without strings attached. Exactly how much financing an organization such as EDUCA will need will depend on the nature of its role.

### *Lessons Learned for Donors*

There are two motivations for donors to provide support to organizations such as EDUCA. One motivation is to use such groups to help build civil society organizations that have the capability to become critical players in the policy reform and service delivery arenas in their countries. Another motivation is to seek strategic alliances with such organizations because they can help the donor to implement loans that support major education reforms.

There are three significant lessons for donors that can be learned from the EDUCA experience:

- Focus where possible on local initiatives and respect the wishes of those who have come up with the initiatives. Avoid thrusting the donor's agenda on the organization.
- If the objective is to help build the capacity of an organization that is in the process of being formed, support the institution in its entirety. Do not limit support to one or more of the organization's programs of specific interest to the donor, leaving other aspects of the organization hanging.
- If the ultimate goal is to support an organization whose main objective is to promote education policy reform, be flexible. Support the grantee in adapting to changing times and changing opportunities.

### *Advantages and Potential Pitfalls of Organizations like EDUCA for Ministries of Education:*

Advantages include:

- (1) in-kind assistance from mass media for publicizing topics of high priority to an education ministry;
- (2) assistance in organizing fora to address critical issues of interest to civil society and the ministry;
- (3) help in mobilizing civil society toward participating in a broad consultation, as EDUCA and other organizations did with the Plan Decenal; and
- (4) assistance in implementing key reforms such as EDUCA did following the approval of the Plan Decenal.

Potential threats (which have not yet occurred in EDUCA's case) include:

- (1) an organization such as EDUCA could potentially divert donor attention and funding from government to itself and other NGOs;
- (2) if extraordinarily effective, an organization such as EDUCA could become a seat of know-how, prestige, authority, legitimacy, and credibility that could make government look weak by comparison;
- (3) such an organization could lure qualified technical staff away from ministries; and
- (4) an organization such as EDUCA could control critical national information that ministries of education do not have.

## **I. INTRODUCTION: JUNE, 1988, A BEACHSIDE RESORT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

The date is June, 1988. The place is the beachside resort of Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic. The scene: a planning retreat of a group of Dominican business people and educators who – 25 years previously – started a private educational foundation called Acción Pro-Educación y Cultura (APEC)<sup>3</sup>. The foundation strives to play a leadership role in education initiatives that support the Dominican Republic's social development.

Gustavo Tavares, a successful businessman who has been an active member of APEC since its initiation, takes advantage of the gathering to present a one-page letter written by his son, Juan Tomás Tavares. In the letter, Juan Tomás asserts that the State has abandoned basic education. Financing for education in general is at an all-time low: less than 1% of GDP and less than 10% of the government budget. Teaching has ceased to be a prestigious profession: the average salary of a primary school teacher is equivalent to that of a household domestic worker. There is a prolonged teachers' strike underway. A recent study shows that entrants into the university have the equivalent of a seventh grade education.

At Gustavo Tavares' suggestion, a commission is formed by APEC to study this problem and recommend what can be done to address it. The commission is composed of Gustavo and Juan Tomás Tavares; Nicolas Pichardo (the director of APEC's university); Francette Amenteros (a prominent Dominican educator who runs a private school); Sor Leonor (a nun who, with her order, has been working to improve the plight of the poor population on the Consuelo sugar cane plantation); and Jacqueline Malagón, executive director of APEC.

Over the course of the next year, the commission broadens. Several prominent educators – among them Monsiñor Agripino Nuñez and Radhames Mejia (the rector and vice-rector of the prestigious Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra) – join the commission. Pedro Pichardo (minister of education) asks to become a member. As it

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<sup>3</sup> Acción Pro-Educación y Cultura (APEC) is a non-profit association founded in 1964 by a group of distinguished Dominican businessmen. With time, APEC has developed into a consortium of seven educational institutions responding to national needs: APEC University, APEC Student Loan Foundation (FUNDAPEC), APEC Distance Education Center (CENAPEC), APEC Sexual Education Institute (INSAPEC), APEC Institute for the Promotion of Women (PROMAPEC), APEC Pre-University School (COLAPEC), and the APEC Institute for Educational Innovations (INAPEC).

broadens, the commission joins forces with a group called “Plan Educativo” which is studying more broadly what can be done to improve education in the Dominican Republic. Plan Educativo is made up of three entities: Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (or INTEC, another of the Dominican Republic’s prestigious universities), the Association of Industries of Herrera, and the Frederick Ebert Foundation of Germany, which finances the group’s activities.

The commission makes many visits – to primary and secondary schools, to the universities, churches, the Dominican teachers’ union (the ADP) – in an effort to better grasp the problem and possible solutions. It becomes apparent early on that the issue is much more profound than originally thought. It also becomes clear that the solution is not to start a handful of schools but to focus on the overall education system.

The commission is particularly engaged by the observations and recommendations of Sor Leonor and the nuns from Consuelo, who pointed to three areas that they believed were key: (1) the need for systemic reform in the Ministry of Education; (2) the need to create the ability at the school level to promote reform by focusing first on creating good school directors; and (3) the need to get parents and communities involved in the education of their children.

In 1989, the commission takes five important first steps:

- (1) It incorporates itself into a private foundation independent of APEC that has as its focus basic education. EDUCA (Acción para la Educación Básica, Inc.) is born.
- (2) With donations<sup>4</sup> from the Dominican private sector, it organizes a series of courses for directors and deputy directors of primary schools. The courses are conducted in collaboration with the nuns from Consuelo.
- (3) Again with private sector backing<sup>5</sup>, it launches a mass media campaign to persuade Dominicans at large of the importance of investing in education.
- (4) Through the UNDP, it arranges to bring to the Dominican Republic a prominent educator – then advisor to Costa Rica’s education

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<sup>4</sup> Two installments of P10,000 (\$1,400) by the Shell Oil Company, followed by a donation of P200,000 (\$28,000) from the E. Leon Jimenez Company.

<sup>5</sup> Private businesses were asked to donate anywhere between 25,000 and 50,000 pesos for the campaign. Mass media firms provided assistance in kind to make television spots.

minister – to do an initial diagnostic of what needs to be done to make systemic improvements in the Ministry of Education.

- (5) It begins looking for funding from international donors for a larger systemic effort. Donors that the commission approaches include the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the United Nations agencies – UNICEF, UNESCO and the UNDP.

Concurrently, Plan Educativo, of which the members of EDUCA have become a part, completes a series of national fora<sup>6</sup> which leads to the publication, in late 1990, of the Decalogo – a document outlining the ten problem areas in education in the Dominican Republic that need to be addressed.

1990 is a very significant year for EDUCA. In March, a commission composed of the education minister, APEC's president, the local UNICEF representative, Gustavo and Juan Tomás Tavares, and Francette Armenteros departs for the *Education for All* conference in Jomtien, Thailand<sup>7</sup>. They take the Decalogo document with them. The group comes home struck by the need to take decisive steps to improve education in the Dominican Republic. In keeping with the spirit and recommendations from the Jomtien conference, EDUCA and four other entities – Plan Educativo, the ADP, the Ministry of Education, and the UNDP – decide to embark on a Ten-Year Plan (Plan Decenal).

On October 15, 1990, EDUCA signs an agreement with USAID to implement a seven-year \$5,500,000 grant<sup>8</sup> entitled “Private Initiatives in Primary Education” (PIPE). The goal of the PIPE project is to “improve the efficiency and quality of the Dominican Republic’s primary education system”. The purpose is to “establish an administrative capacity within EDUCA to organize and oversee the implementation of special studies and training programs as well as the development and revision of instructional materials in math and Spanish which are vital to primary education.”

With the signature of the grant, EDUCA begins what is to become a parallel stream of activities: one (funded by USAID) to provide basic services to Santo Domingo’s poor schools and, in so doing, supplement

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<sup>6</sup> Invited to the fora are prominent individuals from the business sector, the universities, the Dominican teachers’ union (ADP), and the church.

<sup>7</sup> Gustavo and Juan Tomás Tavares and Francette Armenteros finance their own trips.

<sup>8</sup> The grant total was later expanded to \$5,850,000.

what was then a weak Ministry of Education; another (financed with a small amount of funds from the UNDP and with significant private sector contributions) to support policy reform and consciousness raising of the importance of basic education.

Gustavo Tavares – a graduate of Phillips Andover Academy and Brown University who has remained active with EDUCA to this date – said the following in an interview ten years later when asked why he took this initiative and has stuck with it:

*“God has favored us (my son and me) by having given us the best possible education. This education has perhaps helped us to be successful. We have to give back something, both from a philanthropic and egotistical perspective. If the Dominican Republic is going to prosper, if all were educated by the Jesuits, it would be a rich country. Education is the antithesis of ignorance. Ignorance causes poverty. I think of my grandchildren who are honor students at the Carol Morgan School in Santo Domingo and wonder how they will be able to live with the great mass of kids who have no education in the Dominican Republic. They are going to have a social mortgage that is unbearable.”*

In response to the question of why basic education, he observed the following:

*“A child in grade two who is anxious to learn is an educated person. A Ph.D. who knows it all is not an educated person. Children who have a good basic education can grow as they want. Many people who haven’t gone to college have a good basic education and are successful in life.”*



## **II. WHY A STUDY ON THE EDUCA EXPERIENCE?**

The education policy literature is replete with examples of successful and less than successful educational policy reform efforts. However, there is little on the specifics of the roles that civil society – and specifically informed private business people – can play in guiding the education reform process. Over the past decade in Latin America – as dictatorships have been replaced with democracies – private business has itself become more enlightened regarding its self-interest in supporting social development. There has been an outcropping of groups of business people who have attempted to do something to improve education in their countries. EDUCA is one of several examples of instances in which business leaders, committed to doing something to improve the lot of education in their countries, have taken an initiative to effect system-wide change.<sup>9</sup>

This study has been written with these business people as a primary audience. It has been written with the hope that the Dominican case – while by definition specific to the Dominican context – will offer some useful insights for business people in other countries. It is for business people who wish to embark on a similar venture or who are currently involved in education reform and would like to compare their experience to date with another country's experience.

Others who may find this study of interest are:

- (1) donors who might be interested in supporting groups such as EDUCA;
- (2) governments who would like to incorporate civil society in reform efforts; and
- (3) individuals and organizations who are interested in the role of civil society – and specifically groups of business leaders – in education policy reform.

The next two sections of this document address: the context in which EDUCA was born in the late 1980s; what EDUCA is and what activities it has carried out to date, with special emphasis placed on its role in guiding the education policy reform process; and EDUCA's most important accomplishments and challenges.

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<sup>9</sup> Others include: FEPADE in El Salvador, CADERH and FEREMA in Honduras.

The last section addresses what can be learned from the EDUCA experience that has broader significance beyond EDUCA and beyond the Dominican Republic.

### III. CONTEXT

#### A. The Situation of Education in the Dominican Republic<sup>10</sup>

As in other countries in the Latin American region, the 1980s witnessed in the Dominican Republic a marked deterioration of the public education system. A number of governments, most of which were already under-funding education, further reduced investments in education in order to meet structural adjustment targets set by international donors.

The Dominican Republic began the 1980s with a low level of public sector investment in education (2% of GDP and 12.6% of central government expenditures in 1980). One decade later, the country had one of the lowest levels of public sector investment in education in the region (less than 1% of GDP and 9.5% of the government budget in 1990).<sup>11</sup> This contrasts with an average public investment of 4.1% of GDP in education for the Latin American and Caribbean region as a whole in 1990.<sup>12</sup>

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: SOME FACTS AND FIGURES	
<b>Location:</b>	Shares island of Hispaniola with Haiti in the Caribbean
<b>Last Presidential Election:</b>	May, 1996
<b>Current President:</b>	Leonel Fernandez
<b>Population:</b>	7,822,000
<b>Percent Urban:</b>	65%
<b>Population Growth:</b>	2% per year
<b>GDP Growth:</b>	5% in 1994 and 1995
<b>Export Growth:</b>	24% in 1994; 21% in 1995
<b>GNP Per Capita:</b>	\$1,460
<b>Life Expectancy:</b>	71 years
<b>Birth Rate:</b>	24/1000
<b>Literacy:</b>	88%
<b>Gross Primary Enrollments:</b>	97%
<b>Gross Secondary Enrollments:</b>	37%
<b>Education Budget as a Percent of GDP:</b>	2%
<b>Education Budget as a Percent of Government Budget:</b>	13%

During this period, enrollment levels stayed relatively high. What declined was the infrastructure needed to support quality education. Funding for non-salary expenditures (which was already minimal) was

<sup>10</sup> All table data from World Bank Index, 1997. Most are 1995 data.

<sup>11</sup> World Bank. World Development Report, 1993. United Nations Human Development Report, 1992.

<sup>12</sup> PREAL, *El Futuro Está en Juego: Informe de la Comisión Internacional sobre Educación, Equidad, y Competitividad Económica*, April, 1998.

reduced dramatically. Teachers' salaries, already low in the early 1980s, plummeted to less than \$100 per month (in real terms), landing below the minimum wage and equivalent to the monthly salary of a domestic worker. Training opportunities for teachers, once they graduated from normal school, were nearly nonexistent. There was no program whatsoever to train primary school directors. Few to no textbooks were available for either public or private schools. Perhaps most serious was the general lack of appreciation among the Dominican populace of the importance of education as both a social and economic investment in the country's future.

There were consequences: indicators of efficiency – such as repetition in first grade and percentage of students who completed sixth grade without repeating a year of schooling (at 58% and 3% respectively) – were among the worst in the region.<sup>13</sup> In terms of quality, a 1992 pilot study of achievement in math and science among Latin American 13-year-olds found that the Dominican Republic scored the lowest in science and the second to lowest in math among low-income and rural public schools – way behind the national averages in Thailand and the United States and below the national averages in Costa Rica, Argentina, Colombia and Venezuela.<sup>14</sup>

As public sector education declined, private initiatives came in to fill part of the gap. Many groups, led by both private entrepreneurs and NGOs, started private schools in low-income areas. Many of these schools were started in desperate straits: with extremely limited facilities, teachers who weren't qualified to teach, and in many instances a complete lack of texts and teaching materials. Education Ministry oversight of these schools was non-existent.

## **B. Civil Society's Response to Under-Investment in Education and Other Sectors**

A distinguishing feature of the Dominican Republic over recent decades is that it has an active and vibrant civil society. This is to a large extent in response to a tradition of low-level public sector investment in the

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<sup>13</sup> According to a recent report of PREAL, entitled "*El Futuro Está en Juego: Informe de la Comisión Internacional sobre Educación, Equidad, y Competitividad Económica*", the average for Latin America & the Caribbean in 1989 was 42% repetition in grade one and 10% of students completing primary school without repeating. Of the 19 Latin American & Caribbean countries listed, only Haiti had indicators that were worse than those of the Dominican Republic.

<sup>14</sup> Schefelbein, Ernesto. "Education Reform in Latin America and the Caribbean: An Agenda for Action" in *Proyecto Principal de Educación en America Latina y el Caribe*, UNESCO, 1995.

social sectors (not just education, but health and other areas as well). In 1989, Dominicans from all walks of life – ranging from philanthropists who formed NGOs, to religious groups, to community barrio groups – were busily helping to pick up the slack for the public sector. Education was one of several sectors on which they were focusing. Most focused on service delivery; few were involved in trying to pressure the government to provide more support to the social sectors, in part because there was no tradition of civil society playing this advocacy role.

That EDUCA has come into being as a pressure group to promote systemic reform is not unusual. Today there are a number of groups in the Dominican Republic who are becoming quite active in mobilizing reform. What is unusual is both the timing, and who they are. This group of wealthy business leaders was one of the first civil society groups to pressure for reform in the late 1980s, when the Balaguer government was still in power and when it was not fashionable to challenge the government.

## **IV. EDUCA: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT HAS DONE**

### **A. EDUCA's Organization and Structure**

When EDUCA was formed in 1990, it was established as a private non-profit organization headed by a nine-member board – all from the Dominican private sector – and supported by an executive director. In addition, the board decided to reach out to highly regarded individuals in Dominican society – primarily educators and academics – to serve in an advisory capacity to the board.

Jacqueline Malagón, the director of APEC (the mother organization that spawned EDUCA) assumed the role of executive director (on an unpaid basis) while maintaining her role as director of APEC. EDUCA, with funding under the USAID PIPE project, recruited and hired a Project Manager for the PIPE project (Aida Consuelo Hernandez) who, in turn, hired a group of ten individuals<sup>15</sup> to staff EDUCA's operating structure.

USAID funding under the PIPE project was instrumental in helping EDUCA, in its early years, to establish itself. PIPE funds – channeled through a competitively bid contract with the Academy for Educational Development (AED, a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC) – were used to assist EDUCA to establish an institutional base. The funds were used to purchase equipment for EDUCA, and for technical assistance and training. A long-term advisor, hired by AED, came to the Dominican Republic to assist EDUCA with this process. Key EDUCA staff received training in the Dominican Republic and the United States.<sup>16</sup> PIPE funds were also used to finance several observation tours – to the United States, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, and other places – for Malagón, Hernandez, and other members of the EDUCA board and staff. Senior AED personnel met on several occasions (both in the Dominican Republic and in Washington, DC) with EDUCA staff to share what their experience had been in establishing themselves as a non-profit organization devoted to education. This technical assistance and training, plus the exposure that EDUCA staff received to experiences

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<sup>15</sup> The employees included three senior staff, three junior staff, two assistants, and two support personnel.

<sup>16</sup> Areas of technical assistance included: accounting and contracting, as well as management information systems. Training (in the Dominican Republic and elsewhere) was provided in such areas as: fundraising, contracting, management information systems, census methodologies, strategic planning, and management.

in other countries, has been invaluable to EDUCA in establishing itself as an institution.

In 1991, when Malagón was named by the president to be minister of education, she continued to wear both her EDUCA and APEC executive director hats. What followed during the next three years of her tenure as education minister was a unique relationship between the Ministry and EDUCA: EDUCA was given a major entrée into the Ministry. Members of its board and advisory group became part of a larger advisory council that was called upon on numerous occasions to provide advice to the minister and her staff. EDUCA gained a high level of visibility within education circles, and it gained a reputation for helping to improve the lot of education. The Ministry of Education for its part gained individuals from the Dominican private sector that it could count on for support. During Malagón's three-and-a-half-year tenure as minister of education, PIPE funds were also used to finance training and observational travel for select Ministry employees in such areas as achievement testing, management information systems, and teacher training.

When Malagón stepped down as minister of education in 1994 and was replaced with a minister who was not to the private sector's liking, relations continued between EDUCA and the Ministry at the staff level but there was no longer any direct collaboration with the education minister.

In late 1996, Malagón resigned as EDUCA's executive director. After a six-month vacancy, the slot was filled in July of 1997 by Aida Consuelo Hernandez. Hernandez had been the director of the EDUCA/PIPE program. She had played the role of EDUCA's executive director de facto for several years, but without the authority she needed to make decisions. One of the first to congratulate Hernandez on her new appointment was the president of the Dominican Republic. In December 1997, he named her as a special ambassador responsible for coordinating with international donors on education programs. In May 1998, he named her as the Dominican Republic's representative to the board of the Inter-American Institute of the Child.

## **1. *EDUCA's board of directors***

Unlike many PVOs, where the board is constituted more as a formality and meets a couple of times a year, EDUCA has had a very active board

since its inception.<sup>17</sup> Meetings take place on a monthly basis (sometimes more often). Members of the board are active in fundraising and in representing the institution in key fora and other events. The president of EDUCA serves as EDUCA's spokesperson. It is the president's responsibility to make the public aware of EDUCA's policies and positions on specific topics.

Gustavo Tavares, the person responsible for founding EDUCA, served as the president of EDUCA's first board and remained in that position for five years. He was replaced in 1994 by Luis Heredia Bonetti, a prominent Dominican lawyer who was also one of EDUCA's founding members. In 1996, Luis Sanchez Noble, a businessman from Herrera who was active in Plan Educativo, became president of the board.

A new board was voted into office in April of 1998 with George Arzeno Brugal as the president and Juan Tomás Tavares as the vice-president. Arzeno Brugal is a prominent businessman who is the president of Brugal and Compania – a firm with over 1,000 employees established more than 100 years ago which produces and exports Dominican Rum. A former president of the Santo Domingo Chamber of Commerce, the National Council of Businessmen (CONEP) and other private business associations – Arzeno Brugal is known throughout the Dominican Republic for being a person of strong social conscience.<sup>18</sup>

One might ask, why should these people take time from their many business commitments to support an organization such as EDUCA? Here is what several members of EDUCA's board recently had to say when asked this question:

George Arzeno Brugal on why he agreed to become the president of EDUCA's board:

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<sup>17</sup>This has had both its pros and cons. When we carried out the evaluation in June of 1997 there was a great deal of confusion between the role of the board and the role of the paid staff. This confusion was exacerbated by the fact that EDUCA had been without an executive director for over six months.

<sup>18</sup> Four years ago, under his leadership, Brugal and Cia. established the Brugal Award which, once a year, recognizes the top NGOs that are promoting social development in the Dominican Republic. This year the Brugal Award (highly coveted due to both the money provided and the prestige associated with receiving it) was given to NGOs who are playing an important role in supporting development in five areas: education, culture, environment, social assistance, and community development. Each NGO received a cash award of P300,000 (\$20,000). The top of the five received an additional P1,000,000 (\$67,000).



*“A country cannot become developed if it is not educated. We have a low level of education in the Dominican Republic. When I look at developed countries I see the need to improve our education system. I also see the need for our government to invest more money into education. It is not possible for a country to emerge from underdevelopment if we don’t support improvements in education. We businessmen constantly have a scarcity of qualified employees.”*

As for the question “why support basic education?” – EDUCA’s main focus – Arzeno Brugal had the following to say:

*“Basic education is the most important area. We currently have an invasion of mediocrity. To be able to effectively educate at the higher education level we need a base. Students arriving at our universities, and employees who are joining our firms, lack a solid educational base.”*

Juan Tomás Tavares, EDUCA’s new vice-president (and the author of the one-page letter that resulted in the establishment of a commission that evolved into EDUCA), had the following to say about why a group like EDUCA should support basic education:

*“An individual can present an idea, but an institution must turn it into reality. The fact that we as APEC were involved in other areas made it more credible when we reached the conclusion in 1989 that there was a profound crisis. Students who get to the secondary and tertiary levels lack the basic skills they need to function. Several firms have started compensatory courses for their employees.”*

Felix Garcia, a businessman from the city of Santiago and one of EDUCA’s early members, tells the story of how he became a member of the EDUCA board.

*“Gustavo came to me and said, ‘I want your support.’ I offered him money and Gustavo said ‘That’s too easy. You need to get directly involved.’ So I permitted Gustavo to drag me into EDUCA. I knew little about education, but I started learning. As I did, I began to appreciate the key role of education for our country’s development.”*

In the words of J.J. Roca, a prominent Dominican businessman who recently approached EDUCA and asked to be made a member of EDUCA’s board:

*“Without education a country is nothing. Education supports the commercialization of our products. But it is more: we have to support education for everyone if our country is to prosper”.*<sup>19</sup>

Mario Cabrera, a former president of the CONEP – the country’s most prestigious businessmen’s association – has also just agreed to become a member of EDUCA’s board. His reason for taking time out to do this? As he put it very simply:

*“Education is key to the development of this country.”*

## **2. EDUCA’s advisors**

EDUCA also has a distinguished group of advisors – among them the rectors of the Dominican Republic’s two prominent universities, the dean of academic affairs at one of the universities, a former minister of education, the director of a prominent private school, the executive director of a foundation established by a multinational company to support low-income schools, and the nuns from Consuelo.

On numerous occasions over the years, EDUCA’s board and operating staff have called on these advisors for advice, guidance, and support. EDUCA’s executive director, Jacqueline Malagón, also called on these individuals to advise her when she became the minister of education.

Pedro Pichardo, an important advisor to EDUCA from before its inception, was minister of education when EDUCA was in the process of being formed. It was his advice that was fundamental in giving EDUCA the impetus to take on a policy advocacy function. In his words:

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<sup>19</sup> Mr. Roca has supported a variety of charitable activities for years, including direct support for two or three schools. He now wants to have a broader impact on the system.

*“I have worked with the public sector for many years, starting as a teacher in the mountains working my way up to minister of education. My work with the public sector helped me to appreciate that the problem in education in the Dominican Republic was too serious to leave in the hands of the government and teachers’ unions. Business people need to see education as both a personal investment and a social obligation. They need to become convinced of the need to participate in resolving the problems in the education system. If the objective is investment, then the focus needs to be basic education as all investments in higher levels will suffer if there is not a good base at the primary level. In 1988, when I was minister of education, I urged EDUCA to dedicate itself to reforming the education system with a focus on basic education.”*

## **B. EDUCA’s Key Activities to Date**

Since it was established in 1989, EDUCA has been active in four areas – consciousness raising regarding the importance of basic education, advocacy for policy reform, delivery of services to low-income schools, and promoting the involvement of parents and communities in schools.

### **1. *Consciousness raising regarding the importance of basic education***

EDUCA has focused on raising public consciousness about the importance of basic education since the organization was born in late 1989, and it continues to be a main element of EDUCA’s activities. Most of the financing for these activities comes from cash donations from private sector firms in the Dominican Republic or in kind from mass media (in the form of free space). Before EDUCA became incorporated as a PVO in 1990, its founders had already turned to private sector firms for support to carry out social marketing programs designed to promote the importance of parents sending their children to school and the importance of private businesses supporting basic education.

#### *Print publicity*

Since the early 1990s, full-page advertisements and supplements have appeared in newspapers urging parents to send their children to school. The importance of education has been emphasized in the appearance of

EDUCA's logo and slogans such as "*Education is a job for everyone*" printed on plastic grocery bags provided by supermarkets.

### *Media campaigns*

In 1990 and 1993, EDUCA carried out two mass media campaigns (one entitled "*Education, a National Obsession,*" another called "*To Educate is to Teach to Live Better*"). The first campaign in 1990 was carried out with the in-kind assistance of the League of Associations of Publicity Agencies as well as cash donations from private companies equivalent to approximately P250,000 (\$35,000). The second campaign in 1993 was carried out with a limited amount of funding from the PIPE program and a P1,000,000 (\$100,000) donation from CODETEL – the telephone corporation. It is impossible to quantify for the two campaigns the many hours of free air time that radio and television stations have provided or the number of pages of free newspaper space that have been given to support these and other education consciousness-raising activities promoted by EDUCA.

### *Conferences*

In addition, since 1991 EDUCA has been hosting yearly APRENDO<sup>20</sup> conferences through which it has brought together educators and others interested in education. The idea for the APRENDO conference was born in 1991 as an outcome of one of the early director training courses sponsored under PIPE. The courses ended with expositions of materials prepared by students, which took place in either INTEC (one of the universities providing the training) or a nearby cultural center<sup>21</sup>.

In 1995, EDUCA decided to change the format and venue of the yearly APRENDO events. Anticipating that USAID financing for these events through PIPE would soon be coming to an end, the decision was made to hold the event at one of Santo Domingo's nicer hotels and charge an attendance fee of P200 (\$20). To the surprise of EDUCA staff, 1,400 people signed up, well above the 600 participants anticipated.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> 'Aprendo' in English means 'learn'.

<sup>21</sup> Attendees tended to be graduates of EDUCA's teacher and director training programs financed under PIPE.

<sup>22</sup> Since 1995, EDUCA has limited attendance to 1,000 in order to better manage quality, and it has progressively raised the entrance fee – to P300 (\$25) in 1996 and P500 (\$38) in 1997.

The conferences begin on a Friday and last through Sunday. On Friday night, the conference is inaugurated by the president of EDUCA and the minister of education. On Saturday morning there are two feature presentations that center on the theme of the conference<sup>23</sup> – one from a prominent Dominican and one from a well-known speaker from outside the Dominican Republic. Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning are devoted to workshops and panels organized by Dominicans around the conference theme. There is, at present, no other large-scale education conference of this type in the Dominican Republic.

### *Back-to-school campaigns*

EDUCA, in close collaboration with the *Listin Diario* newspaper, has also carried out three back-to-school campaigns entitled “*La Alegria de la Escuela*”<sup>24</sup> in which full court press – involving radio, television, news media, parades, and other types of publicity – has been used to motivate children and parents to prepare for the new school year each September. Private sector donations for the three campaigns have totaled approximately \$10,000.

### *Publications*

Finally, EDUCA has been active – through a series of publications – in promoting the importance of education and specifically basic education. EDUCA has published several of Juan Tomás Tavares’ writings on the importance of basic education. It has also translated articles from *The Economist* and international journals on education, and it has developed a special publication to motivate political leaders and business people to invest in education. These publications have been distributed through the mail and through seminars and fora sponsored by EDUCA to individuals and firms that support EDUCA, universities, and other interested institutions.

## **2. Advocacy for reform**

EDUCA was heavily involved in advocacy for education reform during its early years (1989-1994). Since 1994, for a variety of reasons, it has kept a relatively low profile vis-à-vis promoting reform. It appears that now however, with its new board and with a process of self-analysis it is

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<sup>23</sup> In 1997, the theme was competitiveness. In 1998, the theme will be educational reform.

<sup>24</sup> In English, “The Joy of School.”

currently undergoing, EDUCA will again be getting actively involved in pushing for education reform in the Dominican Republic.

In terms of advocacy work EDUCA has done to date, two areas stand out: 1) support provided by members of EDUCA in 1989 and 1990 for bridging an impasse between teachers and the Ministry of Education; and 2) participation in developing the Plan Decenal for education in the Dominican Republic.

Each is briefly described below.

### *Early support for bridging an impasse between teachers and the Ministry of Education*

In 1989, when government support for education hit rock bottom in the Dominican Republic, teachers' salaries were abysmally low (\$100/month) and – despite attempts by the teachers' union to clamor for increased salaries for teachers – nothing was being done by the government to address the problem. In desperation, the teachers' union – the ADP (which was already collaborating with civil society in the Plan Educativo and subsequently in the Plan Decenal exercise) – turned to the founding members of EDUCA, academia, and other civil society organizations for assistance. Together these groups published a manifesto (which received a good deal of attention in the Dominican press) indicating their deep concern about the status of education, and particularly primary education, in the Dominican Republic.

President Balaguer responded by naming a commission composed of a group of distinguished educators and business people to carry out an in-depth review and come up with recommendations for improving education in the Dominican Republic. Several members of EDUCA's board were named to participate in the commission.

When the commission came back to the president with a series of strong recommendations – which included taking steps to progressively increase teachers' salaries and overhaul the Ministry of Education – the president responded by naming Jacqueline Malagón (then executive director of EDUCA) as education minister and empowering her to make sweeping changes in the Ministry. With encouragement from the outside<sup>25</sup>, he also

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<sup>25</sup> On several occasions, EDUCA teamed up with the ADP to pressure the government, and specifically President Balaguer, to approve salary raises for teachers.

authorized four pay raises for teachers during Malagón's three-year tenure as minister of education.

### *Involvement in developing the Plan Decenal*

Also in 1989, EDUCA became involved in the Plan Educativo movement, which was spearheaded by a group of highly respected academics from INTEC and several business people from the Herrera Industrial Zone. Responding to the crisis in education, Plan Educativo – between 1989 and 1990 – carried out a series of fora with broad representation from the education and academic community and civil society in general to examine the status of education in the Dominican Republic. In early 1990, Plan Educativo published its principal report, the Decalogo, in which it advanced recommendations for improving the education system focusing on literacy, pre-school education, primary education, secondary education, university education, increasing teachers' salaries and incentives, and increasing overall investment in education.

In 1990, Plan Educativo joined forces with EDUCA and the Ministry of Education to take this concern to an international level. Members of EDUCA<sup>26</sup>, APEC, and the Ministry of Education participated in the Dominican delegation to the *Education for All* conference held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. There they were encouraged, along with other delegations, to mobilize civil society to come up with ten-year plans to improve access to primary education in their countries as well as its quality and relevance.

The group returned to the Dominican Republic committed to the idea of spearheading the preparation of a ten-year plan. Five groups joined forces: EDUCA, Plan Educativo, the ADP, the Ministry of Education<sup>27</sup>, and the UNDP. Early on the five groups agreed that, for the plan to be successful, it must be a participatory process. Rather than being developed in an office, it would be the result of a broad consultation of

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<sup>26</sup> Gustavo Tavares, Juan Tomás Tavares, Francette Armenteros

<sup>27</sup> A particularly interesting feature of the Plan Decenal process was that it survived two changes in minister of education. The education minister who went to Jomtien and who collaborated with EDUCA, Plan Educativo, the ADP, and the UNDP for the first year of the Plan Decenal was Nicolas Almanzar. While the Ministry, at the beginning, provided little funding for the Plan, it had Almanzar's full support. Almanzar was replaced toward the end of the first year of the Plan Decenal by Pedro Gil, who was not supportive of the Plan Decenal process. Jacqueline Malagón, who was named minister of education when the Plan Decenal was into its second year, embraced the process. At one point the Plan Decenal Council made the decision that, regardless of what happened in terms of changes in education minister, the Plan Decenal process would continue.

individuals and associations throughout the Dominican Republic. The National Council for the Plan Decenal was established along with an operating committee and a technical advisory committee. Representatives from the five groups that organized the Plan Decenal process served on the operating committee.

The UNDP agreed to finance two advisors to support the Plan Decenal process: an external advisor and a national coordinator. Lorenzo Guademuz – the advisor to the Costa Rican minister of education who had come to the Dominican Republic the year before to do a diagnostic of the Ministry of Education – was hired as the external advisor. Rafael Toribio – who has recently stepped down as Rector of INTEC (and a key person behind the Plan Educativo) – was hired to serve as Guademuz' in-country counterpart and to coordinate the preparation of the Plan Decenal. EDUCA raised P1,300,000 (approximately \$130,000) from the private sector in order to contract specialists to work on different portions of the plan. Sector specialists – several from the Ministry of Education – were hired to draft specific portions. The ADP and the Education Ministry agreed to participate by providing staff to help in the consultative process.

The consultative process leading up to the final preparation of the Plan Decenal was carried out between October of 1990 and December of 1992. It involved consulting with some 30,000 citizens from all walks of life in the Dominican Republic – from high level academics to teachers and school directors, parents, business groups, religious groups, and low-income barrio groups. A total of five consultations were conducted:

- one with Ministry of Education personnel;
- a second with institutions in civil society (including universities that had expertise in education);
- a third with the public at large through communications via mass media where citizens were encouraged to respond on an individual basis;
- a fourth at the community level facilitated by the Ministry of Education and the teachers' union;
- and a fifth at the national level, carried out by educational experts.

It is particularly significant, and a great source of pride to Dominicans, that this was the first (and to our knowledge only successful) effort to date to mobilize a broad cross-section of Dominican society and actually achieve the society's coming to agreement on critical themes.



## Recommendations of the Plan Decenal

The final product – the “Plan Decenal” – recommended a major overhaul in the Dominican Education system.<sup>28</sup> These recommendations included:

- significant decentralization of services and decision making;
- a more active, learner-focused form of teaching;
- a dramatic increase in funding for education;
- comprehensive training of education personnel; and
- the provision of relevant, high-quality texts for all students.

## Outcomes of the Plan Decenal

As significant as the specific recommendations that came out of the Plan Decenal was the high profile that the Plan Educativo and the Plan Decenal processes provided for education in the Dominican Republic. In 1989, when Plan Educativo and EDUCA began their activities, education was in crisis – but it was not on anybody’s agenda. By the time the Plan Educativo and Plan Decenal processes were completed in late 1992, most Dominicans were aware that there was a crisis in education and most stood solidly behind the importance of resolving this crisis.

The Plan Decenal was presented to donors at the Consultative Group Meeting for the Dominican Republic held in Paris in July of 1993. The meeting resulted in a commitment from key donors (the World Bank, the IDB, the European Union) to contribute major funding for education in the Dominican Republic provided that the provisions of the Plan Decenal were passed into law.

## EDUCA’s Role in Supporting the Plan Decenal

Since 1993, EDUCA has focused its efforts on supporting the implementation of the Plan Decenal, through its own activities in low-income communities under the PIPE project; through support to the Ministry of Education in beginning to implement the Plan’s reforms; and in preparing the General Education Law that legislates the proposed Plan Decenal reforms.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Some criticize the Plan Decenal for being a broad-sweeping document that focused more on process than substance. While the authors of the Plan Decenal would argue that there was a definite focus on substance, they point out that the key feature of the Plan Decenal was the participatory process it followed. This participatory process was the first of its kind in the Dominican Republic.

<sup>29</sup> The General Education Law was finally approved in April of 1997, four years after it was drafted and put into circulation.

The specifics of the role that EDUCA played in supporting the Plan Decenal are outlined in the box below.

**EDUCA'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE CONSULTATION  
PROCESS LEADING UP TO THE PLAN DECENAL**

EDUCA was one of five actors that played a useful role in facilitating the consultation process leading to the Plan Decenal. Specifically:

- The executive director and members of the board of EDUCA took advantage of their extensive contacts to persuade influential members of civil society to actively support the Plan Decenal.
- EDUCA members successfully sought out private sector donations of some P1,300,000 which were used to contract specialists to carry out the diagnostic process, to carry out some of the mobilization activities, and for editing and printing documents.<sup>30</sup>
- EDUCA also organized fora with influential people to discuss educational issues along with the implications of meaningful recommendations being considered under the Plan Decenal.
- Members of EDUCA, through their contacts, were able to obtain extensive in-kind mass media coverage for the Plan Decenal activities.
- Following the approval of the Plan Decenal, EDUCA assisted the Ministry of Education with its implementation by providing technical assistance for curricular reform (minimum learning requirements by grade level), financing training (in information systems), and financing observational travel to other countries to learn from other reform processes.
- Also related to implementing the Plan Decenal, at a point when the Ministry of Education lacked funding, EDUCA provided funding to prepare a teachers' guide to permit teachers to make more effective use of the textbooks which were prepared to follow the new curriculum.
- Finally, once the Plan Decenal was completed, EDUCA led by example by incorporating the main elements of the Plan Decenal into its own educational activities in low-income communities in Santo Domingo.

By all accounts EDUCA's combined role of facilitator, catalyst, and subsidizer was critical to the success of the Plan Decenal. What was particularly important was the way in which EDUCA played this role:

<sup>30</sup> The Plan Decenal diagnostic – which took place between December of 1990 and October of 1992 – did not receive any funding whatsoever from USAID under the PIPE project. PIPE funds were utilized subsequent to the approval of the Plan Decenal to assist in its implementation by financing technical assistance, training, and observation tours for Education Ministry personnel, and through the implementation of PIPE training activities in low-income areas of Santo Domingo.

instead of working on its own, it was one of several players (civil society, government, teachers' union) that collaborated to develop a commonly held vision.

### **Obstacles to the Plan's Implementation**

What has not worked out as planned has been the implementation of the Plan Decenal. The technical advisory committee that was formed to guide the Plan's development (most of the members were either on EDUCA's board or were its advisors) became a source of constant guidance to Malagón during her first 18 months as minister of education. However, in Malagón's last year as minister and after she left the Ministry in 1994, the impetus for supporting the Plan Decenal within the Ministry waned.

The General Education Law that was a direct outcome of the Plan Decenal was not approved by the Dominican congress until April of 1997, four and a half years after the Plan was completed. The current president of the Dominican Republic, who took office in August of 1996, was a key actor behind the passage of the General Education Law. However, it would appear that the new minister of education has been less than enthusiastic about implementing some of its most important elements. Among these are the establishment of an educational council in which the ministry of education shares decision making with the teachers' union, academia, and civil society. EDUCA currently represents civil society on this council.

### **3. *Delivery of needed services to low-income schools in Santo Domingo***

Initial USAID support for EDUCA under the PIPE project was not for policy reform or consciousness raising – the two areas outlined above – but for a more traditional service delivery program. USAID was frustrated in its attempts to provide service delivery through the Ministry of Education and saw EDUCA as a channel for accomplishing this objective.

The USAID-funded PIPE project had a three-pronged focus:

- (1) build institutional capability within EDUCA;
  - (2) build institutional capability within a weak Ministry of Education;
- and

- (3) carry out as a stopgap measure a program in low-income areas of Santo Domingo to provide the services that a strong Ministry of Education would ordinarily provide.

The PIPE project was designed by a six-person team contracted by USAID in the fall of 1989. In developing the project design, the team worked closely with Jacqueline Malagón (at the time executive director of EDUCA) and with an individual in the Ministry of Education responsible for curriculum and textbooks.

EDUCA's board was not involved in the project design until the final grant negotiations. At this point, Gustavo Tavares (then president of EDUCA's board) resisted the donation for four reasons: 1) Instead of supporting EDUCA's principal objective of systemic reform to the Ministry of Education, it created a parallel system by working directly with low-income public and private schools in Santo Domingo. 2) It created a small bureaucracy within EDUCA that he doubted EDUCA would be able to support at the end of the project<sup>31</sup>. 3) He was concerned that the proposed program lacked coherence with a pending World Bank/IDB loan to the Ministry of Education that had a textbooks component and a heavy teacher-training focus. 4) The grant required a substantial cash counterpart for specific line items such as teacher training, for which he doubted EDUCA would be able to obtain financing.

Tavares, however, was ultimately persuaded that – given the amount of funding and the fact that the grant activities could give EDUCA broad visibility in Santo Domingo's low-income sector – EDUCA should accept the donation.

The PIPE agreement, signed on October 15, 1990, was divided into two phases: an institutional development phase (1990-1992) in which funds were channeled through the Academy for Educational Development; and a second phase (1992-1997) when funds were channeled directly to EDUCA.<sup>32</sup> Throughout both phases, major focus points of the grant included:

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<sup>31</sup> For donors, a staff of 10 may seem lean, but for an organization such as EDUCA, which was just getting started and which would potentially have to come up with recurrent cost funding to keep these people employed at the end of the project, this was a relatively large staff.

<sup>32</sup> Assistance from AED continued until 1995, though from 1992 on it came through a contractual agreement between EDUCA and USAID.

- a program to train school directors and teachers from public and private schools in low-income areas of Santo Domingo;
- a program to develop and distribute textbooks for selected primary grades;
- a program to develop an achievement testing capability in both EDUCA and the Ministry of Education; and
- a program to develop a management information system within EDUCA.

During grant negotiations in 1994, USAID agreed to expand the grant's scope to include a small amount of funding for social mobilization, advocacy for policy reform, and adoption of low-income schools by local businesses.

Highlights of PIPE's programs follow:

### ***Development and distribution of textbooks***

In keeping with the spirit of the Plan Decenal, EDUCA commissioned the preparation of new mathematics and Spanish textbooks and workbooks, which were subsequently distributed throughout public schools. Over a two-year period (1992-1993) more than 150,000 textbooks; 1,500 dictionaries; and 6,000 encyclopedias were produced and distributed to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in low-income schools in Santo Domingo.<sup>33</sup>

### ***Training of school directors***

Under the PIPE project, over 800 school directors in low-income areas of Santo Domingo received training. Approximately 10% of all primary school directors in the Dominican Republic were training recipients, while the training reached 50% of the directors in the national district.

In selecting schools from which to draw directors for training, EDUCA avoided private business enterprises that are schools only by name. The organization used 13 stringent criteria in the selection process, choosing schools in low-income areas of Santo Domingo where upgrading could lead to permanent improvements and might facilitate conformity with the standards of the Plan Decenal.

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<sup>33</sup> EDUCA educational materials advisors also provided assistance to the IDB in designing additional textbooks and educational materials that were reproduced and distributed under a major IDB loan in the early 1990s.

The training was contracted out to three higher education institutions: the Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (INTEC), the Universidad Nacional Pedro Henriquez Urena (UNPHU), and the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (UASD).

The program lasted two years<sup>34</sup> and provided instruction in school management as well as an introduction to the pedagogical renewal contained in the Plan Decenal. The monthly follow-ups during the academic years have permitted a sustained exchange of experiences and the emergence of support networks among the school directors, some coming from private schools and others from public schools. An important – and unanticipated – outcome of this program has been the emergence, under EDUCA's guidance, of an alumni association and a multiple services cooperative for low-income private schools.

### ***Teacher training***

Over 3,100 private sector non-certified teachers and nearly 900 certified teachers in low-income areas of Santo Domingo received long-term training through a program similar to the director-training program. In addition, over 4,400 teachers received short-term training in conjunction with teacher-training programs financed by the World Bank and the IDB.

As with the director-training program, the long-term teacher-training program lasted two years. The curriculum was common to all training institutions. Several of the training institutions made it possible for students participating in these programs to obtain equivalencies that they could then apply toward a regular university degree.

### ***School adoption program***

Over the years, EDUCA – in close collaboration with the Falconbridge Foundation<sup>35</sup> – has been instrumental in helping to arrange ‘adoptions’ between 170 schools and private enterprises (firms, Rotary Clubs, Lions’ Clubs) throughout the Dominican Republic. EDUCA funds have been used to provide a salary supplement and a vehicle for an Education Ministry employee who is responsible for arranging and monitoring the adoptions. While assistance to the schools varies on a case-by-case basis depending on need, it has included assistance in such areas as: building

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<sup>34</sup> The program consisted of two summers – where students attended classes full-time – and two school years – with class attendance on Saturdays.

<sup>35</sup> The Falconbridge Foundation was the first group to initiate a school adoption program in the Dominican Republic.

repair; the purchase of electrical generators for schools; the purchase of school furniture and books; and the financing of teachers' workshops.

With the National Housing Bank and the Dominican Maritime Company, EDUCA has also sponsored cultural excursions for primary school students. A critical lesson learned through this process is that, for school adoption programs to be effective, parents and other community members need to take ownership for the program. This means involving them from the start.

Another important lesson is that direct support for low-income schools can be very helpful to private business people in improving their image. In the words of Pedro Pichardo, former minister of education and an adviser to EDUCA since its inception:

*"In countries such as ours, the middle and lower classes tend to see business leaders as bad people who are out to exploit them. EDUCA has a program that shows that businessmen can work with the people for the common good. Humble people who are disposed to see business people as 'the bad guys' are, through the adoption program, seeing business people with another face. These linkages are very important."*

### ***Installation of achievement testing and management information system capabilities***

Under the PIPE project, EDUCA also initiated activities in two related areas – achievement testing, and the installation of a management information system (MIS). There was a dual rationale: (1) provide a database for tracking the success of PIPE activities in low-income schools in Santo Domingo; and (2) strengthen the institutional capability of the Ministry of Education.

With USAID assistance under the PIPE project, EDUCA contracted a local firm, ASISA, to design, test, and administer achievement tests in schools benefiting from the inputs provided under the PIPE project (textbooks, director and teacher training).

Over the life of the project, 87,450 tests were administered and reported on. Mean achievements were reported to EDUCA by school. The results showed enormous variation from school to school. There were virtually no gender differences. There was a negative age correlation. Private schools seemed to outperform public schools. Standardized

achievement tests had been part of the Plan Decenal from the beginning, but like so many other parts of the Plan, implementation of achievement testing was slow.

The expertise accumulated by EDUCA was instrumental in helping the Ministry of Education to launch a national testing program, through EDUCA's advice on content and methodology as well as through its training of Ministry of Education personnel.

The second data-related activity the PIPE project provided for was the installation in EDUCA of a complete and flexible MIS supplying the data EDUCA staff needed for decision making on a daily basis. There was a triple rationale for the MIS: 1) assist in carrying out significant research work<sup>36</sup>; 2) assist in selecting EDUCA activities as well as targeting service delivery; and 3) foster two-way data exchanges between EDUCA and the Ministry of Education's MIS.

#### **4. *Promoting the involvement of parents and communities in schools***

EDUCA, since its inception, has placed a great deal of emphasis on the importance of promoting parental and community involvement in schools. An important vehicle (outside of USAID funding under PIPE) for promoting this concept has been a relationship that EDUCA established early on with the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic, and which continues to this date.

In 1990, EDUCA arranged for a private firm to give a small donation to a Peace Corps volunteer who had created a materials development center in the district of Jarabacoa. Parents contributed a small monthly quota to the center as well. This program eventually expanded to include 12 schools in the area. When Jacqueline Malagón became education minister, she developed the program further – with Ministry funds and with continued Peace Corps participation – to 16 materials development centers throughout the country.

Also in the early 1990s, EDUCA persuaded a Peace Corps volunteer working in education to prepare a series of booklets aimed at enhancing parental participation in schools. One booklet, entitled "*Your School Needs You*" provides guidelines on how to form a parents' association.

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<sup>36</sup> In 1995, EDUCA carried out a census of primary schools in Santo Domingo. Both the census and a 1996 update – based on a sample of schools in Santo Domingo – have been in high demand.



Another, entitled “*Your Child Needs You*” provides guidelines on how parents can support their children at home. A third, entitled “*Your Country Needs You*”, shows how parents and communities in general can use the school as a point of departure for citizen participation. The booklets were reproduced (one had as many as 50,000 copies printed) with financing from local firms<sup>37</sup> and distributed through Ministry-sponsored events.

More recently, EDUCA – with the assistance of Peace Corps volunteers and the Ministry of Education – initiated a pilot non-formal pre-school program which is being carried out in the local communities of two suburbs of Santo Domingo: Haina and Los Alcarrizos. The program has three objectives: 1) raise consciousness among families concerning the role of parents in the educational development of their children; 2) integrate the community in the development of the pre-school center in their neighborhood; and 3) provide adequate conditions which allow the facilitator and students to develop age-appropriate basic motor, social, conceptual, and communications skills.

As with its other programs, EDUCA has served as the vital link between innovative ideas and funding. In this case, the innovative ideas came from Peace Corps volunteers. EDUCA is obtaining funding for the program both from private firms in the areas where the program is located and from external donors.

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<sup>37</sup> Colgate-Palmolive, the Industrial Society of the Dominican Republic

## **V. EDUCA’S KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES**

While in the Dominican Republic undertaking the EDUCA evaluation, we had occasion to ask individuals from the gamut of Dominican society<sup>38</sup> what they thought were EDUCA’s successes; what the organization could have done better; whether EDUCA had reason to continue existing; and, if so, what EDUCA’s role should be. In addition, over 80 primary school directors and teachers supported under EDUCA/PIPE were interviewed in five focus group sessions in which they were asked similar questions.

This is what these individuals had to say:

### **A. Elements contributing to EDUCA’s success**

EDUCA has enjoyed much success, as the list to follow clearly shows. If, however, the authors of this study were to highlight the five things that stand out as being the most critical, they would be the items included in the box below:

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<sup>38</sup> Interviews were carried out with the current minister of education and three former ministers of education, representatives from the Catholic and Evangelical churches (including the Cardinal), and representatives from mass media, the political parties, labor unions, private enterprise, and PVOs involved in education.

### **SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO EDUCA'S SUCCESS TO DATE**

1. EDUCA has chosen to focus on basic education in general as opposed to just a small segment that might be within its own particular interest – private sector education. With USAID support, EDUCA has provided critical services to low-income areas in Santo Domingo and elsewhere, thus permitting it to develop a positive image among key sectors of the Dominican population.<sup>39</sup>
2. EDUCA's board of directors is made up of a group of Dominican business people who enjoy a high level of credibility and EDUCA continues to attract fresh talent to its board. In addition, EDUCA has been able to attract several highly respected educators, academics, and others to serve in an advisory capacity to the board.
3. EDUCA has served as a catalyst in forging linkages between educational institutions that might not have ordinarily associated with one another. Instead of insisting on always taking the lead role, EDUCA has chosen to operate by establishing strategic alliances in which it is one of many actors.
4. Instead of developing its own in-house capability to deliver services, EDUCA has contracted with other institutions. In so doing, it has reduced its administrative burden, helped build the capacity of other Dominican institutions (especially the universities) in specific areas, and gained friends from among the institutions with which it has collaborated.
5. EDUCA's board of directors has the capability to obtain resources, both through monetary contributions and contributions in kind.

A more detailed listing of these and other reasons for EDUCA's success follows:

#### **1. Origins**

***EDUCA was born out of an existing private sector organization, APEC, which was established 25 years ago.*** EDUCA members, therefore, had a model to follow and prior experience to build on when they set out to establish their new organization.

***EDUCA was the initiative of a group of business people who were determined to proceed under any circumstances.*** Before coming to USAID for support, EDUCA was already working on a strategy, carrying out a small training program and a social mobilization program with

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<sup>39</sup> One might argue that, in providing services to low-income areas, EDUCA replaced a function that the Ministry of Education should have carried out – and this is true. However, at the time, the formal education system was in such disarray that EDUCA and USAID concluded that it was important for EDUCA to step in and provide this type of service on an emergency basis.

private sector donations, and it had received a small amount of funding from the UNDP for a short-term consultancy. It would have been launched even if USAID had chosen not to fund it.

## **2. Image**

***EDUCA is broadly seen as a non-partisan organization with no political ties or interests.*** This image continues to this date. For the Dominican Republic, whose political system is very polarized, this is a major accomplishment.

***By providing much-needed services to the education community, especially in low-income areas, EDUCA has developed a positive image among key sectors of the Dominican population.*** The school directors and teachers that have benefited from EDUCA's work speak highly of the services they have received and hold EDUCA in great esteem.

## **3. Strategic focus**

***EDUCA has chosen to focus on the education system in general as opposed to just a small segment that might be within its own interest – private sector education.*** In particular, EDUCA has focused on improving the quality of education that is delivered to children in low-income areas of Santo Domingo. This has done much to bolster its credibility.

***Consciousness raising on the importance of supporting education has consistently been a top priority for EDUCA.*** A common theme, during the interviews carried out in the evaluation, was that EDUCA – through its consciousness raising and its advocacy activities – has succeeded in putting education on the Dominican national agenda.

## **4. Composition**

***EDUCA's board of directors is made up of a group of Dominican business people who enjoy a high level of credibility.*** Members of the board are deeply committed to education and project this image to the public at large. The newly elected board includes some very trusted and well connected business people who stand firmly behind improving education.

***EDUCA continues to attract fresh talent to its board of directors.*** In the last two years, EDUCA has incorporated several young up-and-coming

business people into its board. These individuals are very enthusiastic EDUCA supporters. EDUCA's new president, a prominent businessman who is 73 years old, is committed to continuing to attract young leadership to the organization.

***EDUCA has been able to attract highly respected educators, academics, and others to serve in an advisory capacity to the board.***

There are a number of prominent Dominicans from a variety of walks of life (educators, representatives of mass media, civil activists) who indicated during the evaluation interviews that they would be delighted to assist EDUCA if asked.

## **5. Operations**

***EDUCA has served as a catalyst in forging linkages between educational institutions that might not have ordinarily associated with one another.*** EDUCA played an important role in facilitating the implementation of the Plan Decenal. EDUCA made the deliberate decision to get bids from a variety of higher education institutions to provide teacher training under the PIPE project. Today, there are seven institutions that work closely together in designing and delivering teacher-training programs, thanks to EDUCA's impetus. EDUCA's new executive director and president are committed to keeping EDUCA in this catalytic role.

***Instead of developing its own in-house capability to deliver services, EDUCA has contracted with other institutions.*** In so doing, EDUCA has: 1) avoided the pitfalls of having a large administrative structure; 2) served an important role in strengthening other institutional capabilities that will function beyond the tenure of EDUCA's support for them; and 3) developed valuable allies that it can call upon for other efforts. This is the case in the areas of teacher training, director training, design and reproduction of textbooks, and achievement testing. Cultivating alliances is something that the current executive director and president view as another of EDUCA's strengths which they want to continue.

***EDUCA collaborated closely with the World Bank and the IDB in the implementation of their first loans.*** EDUCA provided technical assistance to the IDB in textbook development<sup>40</sup>. It collaborated with the World Bank in the Bank's expansion of the teacher-training program initiated by EDUCA. Both the World Bank and the IDB are aware of

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<sup>40</sup> This textbook development was funded through EDUCA's grant from USAID.

and appreciate this collaboration. EDUCA would like to combine forces with both Banks in ensuring the implementation of the current World Bank/IDB loan, which is centered around implementing the key recommendations of the Plan Decenal.

***EDUCA has been instrumental in forging linkages between public and private school directors and teachers.*** An association composed of public and private school directors was formed at the initiative of primary school directors who received training from EDUCA. During the focus group sessions carried out for the EDUCA evaluation, several teachers and directors pointed out that, for the first time, the barrier between public and private schools had been broken.

***EDUCA has a track record of having successfully served as a mediator, and in so doing has established its credibility with key sectors of society.*** In 1989 and 1990, when it was in the process of being formed, members of EDUCA mediated between the government and the teachers' union to bring a major teachers' strike to an end. They prevailed in persuading the government to raise teachers' salaries, a victory which to this day the teachers' union and teachers in general have not forgotten.

***EDUCA's board of directors has the capability to obtain resources – both through monetary contributions<sup>41</sup> and contributions in kind<sup>42</sup>.*** EDUCA, thanks in large part to the persistence and commitment of Gustavo Tavares, has been able to generate sizable private sector donations.

## **6. Quality of service delivery**

***USAID support through PIPE allowed EDUCA to develop models of effective education service delivery.*** Specifically EDUCA has shown that one *can* produce textbooks of high quality in a short period of time, one *can* distribute them at the beginning of the school year, and one *should* train the entire staff of a school, beginning with the director.

***EDUCA's support in the area of textbook development and distribution has received high marks. EDUCA has also received universal acclaim from school directors and teachers alike for the teacher/director***

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<sup>41</sup> EDUCA receives approximately P150,000 per month (a little over \$10,000) through a combination of dues and a variety of fundraising events.

<sup>42</sup> EDUCA has been able to obtain assistance without charge from the media (television, newspapers, radio) to both prepare spots and air publicity for EDUCA and the importance of education.

***training provided under the PIPE program.*** Ministry officials, school directors, and teachers universally cited the high quality of the content of EDUCA books and materials. Outside of its activities in advocacy, EDUCA's program to train school directors and teachers is one of its most noticeable accomplishments – and the one people most often refer to when asked about the organization's achievements.

Specifics of successful strategies adopted by EDUCA in the area of textbook production and director/teacher training follow:

### **WHAT EDUCA HAS ACCOMPLISHED IN TEXTBOOK PRODUCTION AND DIRECTOR/TEACHER TRAINING**

- EDUCA focused all of its activities (textbooks, director training, teacher training, achievement testing) around the implementation of the Plan Decenal and the pending General Education Law.
- It decided to let substantial training for school directors precede any training for teachers, a move which paved the way for teachers returning to their schools from training to receive support from their directors.
- School directors that received training from EDUCA: (a) are implementing at least some new management procedures; (b) have become promoters of education reform; and (c) are maintaining links and exchanges (in the barrios, between public and private sectors, and across NGO networks) that are vital to the Reform and to the philosophy of the PIPE project.
- With support from EDUCA, directors have established an alumni association with membership of over 500. This organization has formed a multiple services cooperative of private schools that EDUCA is also supporting. The association could turn out to offer significant muscle in pushing from the bottom up to ensure the implementation of the General Education Law.
- Teachers who received training through PIPE are in general agreement that the training content was excellent both for upgrading teachers' knowledge base and for modernizing their pedagogical methods. In particular, teachers found the training valuable in that they learned to make do with scarce resources and to let children acquire knowledge without the help of textbooks, which were often lacking.
- Teachers showed significant increases in knowledge and comprehension of the training materials between pre- and post-tests conducted as an integral part of the teacher training.
- Qualitative reports on teacher performance suggest that many are employing a more participatory and stimulating approach, rather than teaching by rote. In addition, training has been instrumental in improving teacher self-confidence, and transforming career expectations and social status.

## **B. Challenges and room for improvement**

Since 1989 when EDUCA began operations, there have been major changes in the political and economic situations in the Dominican Republic, as well as in the education milieu:



- Since the early 1990s, the Dominican economy has been prospering with an average annual GDP growth rate of 5.5%. This gives the government added resources to devote to education.
- In 1996, following 60 years of autocratic rule under Presidents Trujillo and Balaguer, a free and fair election ushered in a democratically elected government.
- The new president, Leonel Fernandez, immediately declared his support for education and took visible steps to put education high on his country's agenda.

These changes have posed a new set of challenges for EDUCA. Putting education on the national agenda and ensuring adequate funding for education are no longer high priorities. Instead, the top priority becomes ensuring that the recently passed General Education Law – a direct outcome of the Plan Decenal process – is being properly implemented. A further challenge for EDUCA is that it no longer has an 'in' with the Ministry of Education as it did in the early 1990s when its executive director was the education minister.

EDUCA faces additional challenges:

***EDUCA's greatest challenge is deciding where its priorities lie – with advocacy for reform as its highest priority versus focusing primarily on service delivery.*** A critical message from the EDUCA evaluation is that many Dominicans are looking to EDUCA to take a lead role in pressuring the new government to implement the General Education Law. As of the finalization of this document, EDUCA's new executive director and the recently elected president of the board are working on a strategy which will put EDUCA at the forefront in an advocacy role over the next two years. As indicated in the box below, it looks as though EDUCA plans to build on its role as catalyst/convener/facilitator, which made it an effective participant in the Plan Decenal process. The contents of the box below are excerpted from a draft strategic plan for the 1998-2001 period prepared by EDUCA on July 29, 1998. The draft strategic plan is, at this point, a working document that will no doubt be fine-tuned and made more specific as the draft undergoes further discussion.

## **EDUCA'S STRATEGIC PLAN**

### ***EDUCA'S Institutional Vision***

- Develop a network of private, community, and government efforts dedicated to elevating the quality of basic education in the Dominican Republic.
- Operate with a voice that is authorized to take positions on and define criteria related to critical educational problems.
- Act as a channel for private enterprise to become involved in the development of educational innovation.
- Provide a source of educational information, values, and concepts that are incorporated into the public thinking and debate on education.
- Serve as a mechanism for seeking consensus on the best ways of achieving national educational goals.
- Exist as an entity with international recognition that supports international organizations' initiatives in education and receives support from these organizations.
- Work as a catalyst and conduit for private enterprise and academia to support the development, strengthening, and sustainability of education at the national level.

### ***EDUCA'S Mission***

"Our objective is that each child has access to education. Quality of education is our commitment. Our challenge is participation of private enterprise and sharing of social responsibility to achieve these ends."

### ***EDUCA'S Strategic Objectives***

- Promote and defend – among major players in civil society and the public sector – consensus on the values, criteria, concepts, and attitudes needed to improve education, with an emphasis on basic education.
- Ensure civil society follow up and oversight of key elements of the national education agenda that have been developed and agreed upon jointly by government and civil society (for example, the General Education Law).
- Develop model experiences oriented toward addressing the resolution of significant problems faced by under-served populations in the educational system. One example of a model experience is decentralized projects developed jointly by community groups, private enterprise, and the Ministry of Education.

***Another challenge is maintaining a seat at the table when it comes to influencing policy reform.*** EDUCA's finest hours in the policy reform arena were in the late 1980s and early 1990s when the education system was in crisis. EDUCA was able to step in and play a deciding mediating role between the teachers' union and the government on the salary issue.

EDUCA was also instrumental in joining forces with other key groups to carry out the diagnostic process leading to the Plan Decenal. When it came to ensuring the implementation of the Plan Decenal, EDUCA was able to influence the Ministry of Education. However, over time EDUCA's ability to influence policy eroded, and when Jacqueline Malagón was replaced in 1994, EDUCA essentially became a non-player. While EDUCA's recent decision to take on a key policy advocacy role (see above) augurs well, it remains to be seen whether EDUCA will be able to regain influence with the Ministry. Likewise, only time will tell whether it will be a major player in ensuring the implementation of the Plan Decenal and the General Education Law under the current government.

***EDUCA's financial sustainability remains an issue.*** Up until the end of February 1998, EDUCA had a sure source of funding from USAID, primarily for service delivery. This funding is no longer available. EDUCA has generated the capability to receive some \$10,000 per month in dues and donations, which permits the organization to keep operating with its current nine-person staff.<sup>43</sup> This, however, may be tenuous since Dominican business people who provide donations to EDUCA want to see concrete results come from their money as opposed to having their funds cover operating expenses.

EDUCA faces three important challenges when it comes to ensuring its future financial sustainability:

1. Deciding how much funding it needs in order to operate. This decision can only be made once there is clarity regarding what EDUCA's future role will be. That is, if the choice is primarily advocacy for reform versus primarily service delivery, and service delivery wins out, what specific role will EDUCA play in the advocacy arena?
2. Diversifying its funding base so that it is not dependent solely on one source, as it has been in the past ; and
3. Avoiding the temptation of entering into new programs and projects simply because they involve work for which funding is readily available. EDUCA's new president is very much aware of this challenge and has made the issue of future financing a top priority.

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<sup>43</sup> EDUCA let one staffer go when it's USAID funding ran out in late February of 1998.

***EDUCA has experienced problems with both its achievement testing and management information systems, putting into question whether these are two areas that EDUCA should continue working on.*** In the case of achievement testing, there were problems with the tests themselves. The tests did not always cover material which had been taught. Post-test materials were much harder than pre-test materials, making it difficult to judge learning gains adequately. There were also problems with the variables covered in the tests. For example, data on whether students had books, teachers had training, etc. were not collected and thus could not be included in the analysis of outcomes.

There were problems with the data analysis. For example, many of the most important results of the reform – such as autonomy and self-confidence – were not measured or analyzed.

In the case of the installation of the MIS, by the end of the PIPE project the system was still incomplete. Some of the most important data files on schools, teachers, and students' performance was either still in the data-input stage or not yet related to an integrated database at the time the PIPE project ended. The system was also fragile in that only two EDUCA staff members were competent in handling and using it. In addition, there was no evidence that either the selection of EDUCA activities or the targeting of service delivery (one of the main objectives of this component) were arrived at through MIS-based analysis. No significant two-way data exchanges had taken place between EDUCA and Ministry of Education staff, as planned.

What EDUCA does or chooses not to do in the area of achievement testing and management information systems in the future will depend on the role it decides to take in advocacy for reform.

***While those individuals in low-income areas who have benefited from EDUCA's services appreciate what EDUCA has provided, EDUCA is still seen as a somewhat elitist organization.*** EDUCA recognizes that this is part of its image. It also realizes that – to be effective in its advocacy role – it needs to reach out to and work with a broad cross-section of Dominican society. The key question is how to do this. One option is to establish alliances with other organizations. Another is to open membership in its board and advisor group to a wider cross-section of Dominican society. This decision has yet to be made by the new executive director and board.

***Finally, should EDUCA enter into the service-delivery arena, the organization needs to constantly weigh the pros and cons of what its specific role is in this arena.*** There is a range of options which includes: incubating new programs that EDUCA hopes it can interest the Ministry of Education to take on (such as the community pre-school program it is currently supporting); and continuing programs such as teacher and director training which directly replace or supplement programs that are ordinarily carried out by education ministries.

## **VI. WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM THE EDUCA EXPERIENCE THAT HAS BROADER SIGNIFICANCE BEYOND EDUCA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC?**

Based on a variety of exchanges during the EDUCA evaluation and subsequent briefings<sup>44</sup>, we identified several issues that the EDUCA study should address:

1. *What are the circumstances that help facilitate private initiatives such as this one?*
2. *What are the circumstances that can discourage this type of initiative?*
3. *Why, in the face of obstacles, should business people continue to invest time, money, as well as social and political capital into supporting education in their countries?*
4. *How can groups such as EDUCA influence education policy reform?*
5. *To what extent should policy advocacy groups also be involved in service delivery?*
6. *What can donors do to support initiatives such as EDUCA's? How can they benefit from institutions such as EDUCA?*
7. *What are the benefits of initiatives such as EDUCA's for governments? What are the potential threats?*
8. *How does one measure the success of initiatives such as EDUCA's?*
9. *How can efforts such as these be sustained?*

The last section of the EDUCA study now turns to these nine questions. These are generic questions that apply not only to EDUCA, but to any civil society organization that seeks to play a role in service delivery and in influencing education policy.

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<sup>44</sup> The following organizations were briefed on the outcome of the EDUCA evaluation and asked for their views on what should be addressed in this case study: USAID staff in Washington DC, staff from the World Bank and the IDB, staff from the Inter-American Dialogue (IAD), and staff from the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the American Institutes of Research (AIR).

## **1. *What are the circumstances that help facilitate a private initiative such as EDUCA's?***

Clearly the single most important circumstance that was responsible for jump-starting a group of business people to do something about education in the case of the Dominican Republic was a major crisis in the education system. Had education not hit rock bottom in the Dominican Republic, had teachers and society at large not been as disillusioned as they were, had business people not been frustrated with the poor literacy skills of both unskilled and skilled workers that were entering their firms – it is doubtful that there would have been as strong an impetus as there was for a group of well-intentioned business people to rally together to support the cause.

Another circumstance that helped facilitate this initiative was that business people in the Dominican Republic were not starting from scratch. The founders of EDUCA had each been involved – many for up to two decades – in supporting a private sector foundation (APEC) that financed vocational skills training and higher education. They had the know-how to take their business skills and convert them into initiatives to promote development. They knew how to form an NGO and what needed to be done to run one. As individuals associated with APEC, they had credibility.

Technical assistance and training financed by USAID through the PIPE project undoubtedly helped. This technical assistance and training was provided – through a contract with AED – in a variety of areas: contracting, fundraising, management information systems, carrying out a census, achievement testing, textbook design, strategic planning, and management. This, plus numerous observation tours to see what was being done in other countries in the region (Jamaica, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile), provided EDUCA and Ministry of Education staff with valuable perspectives that they might not have otherwise had.

Finally, and this was a rather unique situation (although it is possible that similar circumstances may arise in other countries), EDUCA's executive director – soon after EDUCA was formed – was named minister of education. During her three years as education minister (all the while continuing to wear her EDUCA executive director hat), Jacqueline Malagón was able to bring EDUCA's private business leaders into the action at the Ministry. Especially during the first 18 months of her

tenure, EDUCA was constantly called upon by Malagón to provide support to her initiatives as minister of education. By playing an active, and at times visible, role in supporting the education minister, EDUCA got favorable publicity with the public at large.

What are the most important messages? One is that groups such as EDUCA need to be prepared to take advantage of circumstances<sup>45</sup> as they arise so as to step in and take a proactive role in helping to define as well as guide the reform process. Another is that training, technical assistance, and financing for observation tours – provided at strategic moments by an outside donor (in this case from USAID) – undoubtedly help. A third is that it helps to maintain, where possible, a positive and constructive relationship with the Ministry of Education, although there may be times when organizations such as EDUCA may have to push from the outside for reform or in order to ensure the implementation of key reforms.

## **2. *What are the circumstances that can work against an organization such as EDUCA?***

Not surprisingly, what was at the beginning one of EDUCA's key strengths, subsequently became its very weakness. When Jacqueline Malagón was replaced as minister of education in 1996, she maintained her role as executive director of EDUCA. The doors of the Ministry of Education, initially opened wide to EDUCA, closed. Subsequent ministers of education felt threatened by Malagón's presence in EDUCA and, therefore, reduced the intensity of the relationship and the frequency of their contacts with EDUCA.

This, however, did not isolate EDUCA. EDUCA maintained good relations at the staff level in the Ministry of Education. In addition, in July of 1997, as the evaluation was being completed, the former director of the PIPE program, Aida Consuelo Hernandez, was moved into the role of EDUCA's executive director. Hernandez has an excellent relationship with the president of the Dominican Republic, having known him before he became president, and the president has recently named her as a special ambassador responsible for supporting international offers for assistance to education. This has helped EDUCA's relationship with the Ministry of Education and, in particular, with the new minister.

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<sup>45</sup> For example: a serious crisis that must be addressed, an opportunity presented by a new government.



Changes in leadership in an organization such as EDUCA and the lack of a coherent strategic vision can also work against such an organization. One gets the sense that, over time, EDUCA has lost its niche in the education market, that it has become less effective, and that for a period of time EDUCA lost its ability to take maximum advantage of its highly qualified technical advisors. When the external evaluation of EDUCA was carried out in June of 1997, EDUCA was at an all-time low. It had had many successes but was not sure where to go next.

Success can lead to redundancy. Sometimes organizations such as EDUCA are unable to change with the times. The needs in the education sector have changed dramatically over recent years in the Dominican Republic. Education is now very much on the national agenda, thanks in large part to EDUCA's efforts, and the new government has clearly stated that education is a priority. The challenge for EDUCA (and organizations like it) is, as times change, to redefine its vision and what it wants to accomplish. If it doesn't do this, it runs the risk of becoming a marginal actor in the education scene.

### ***3. Why, in the face of obstacles, should business people continue to invest time, money, and social and political capital into supporting education in their countries?***

For business people, vested self-interest (keeping their businesses competitive) and promoting the social good (providing quality education for all Dominicans, even if they are not members of their firms) become closely woven together. As can be seen in the prior section of this report, each and every business leader who is active in EDUCA gives a slightly different answer regarding why they are investing time, money, and social and political capital into supporting education in their country. However, the one theme that is common to all of them is their deep-seated personal commitment to education and their belief that the Dominican Republic will not survive and thrive in this increasingly competitive world if it doesn't have an educated labor force.

No matter the context or the country, business people need some kind of return on their investments. They need something that comes personally to them (such as deep satisfaction in seeing that they are improving circumstances in their country). They need something for their businesses (increased education of workers translates into increased productivity for the firm, and thus increased profits). They also need

something for the future health of their country (education is a sine qua non for democracy, and democracy means stability).

George Arzeno Brugal, recently elected to be president of EDUCA's board of directors, responded for himself and his fellow board members when asked the question of why support basic education if the returns aren't immediate:

*"We are preparing for the next generation."*

#### **4. How can groups such as EDUCA influence the policy reform process?**

Civil society organizations can play a number of important roles in influencing policy reform. Most important is defining the value-added an organization such as EDUCA can provide in affecting the process of policy reform, and then capitalizing on this value-added.

In the case of EDUCA, its value-added resides in the credibility of its membership, the ability of its members through their multiple contacts to open doors, and the fact that EDUCA is seen as a non-partisan organization. EDUCA has the ability to organize fora around topics of concern in education. EDUCA can attract to these fora influential individuals from government, academia, and other sectors of civil society. EDUCA members have repeatedly shown their ability to gain highly visible press coverage for key education events and to get mass advertising at short notice and free of charge.

Listed below, based on the EDUCA experience, are several lessons learned for organizations that have objectives similar to EDUCA's. While for some, these lessons may seem obvious, experience elsewhere has shown that this is not necessarily the case for similar groups who are in the process of getting started.

**LESSONS LEARNED  
FOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH AIMS SIMILAR TO EDUCA'S**

- If the organization has an interest in advocating for policy reform, examine how policy reform fits into its priorities, and then structure the organization accordingly.
  - It is critical to have basic agreement within the organization on its vision and its mission.
  - The organization's programmatic focus, the composition of its board of directors, its advisors, and the executive director need to reflect the organization's strategy for advocating for policy reform.
  - In an environment where things are constantly changing, think and act both flexibly and strategically.
- Join forces with other organizations. As appropriate, serve as convener, facilitator, mobilizer. Be prepared to take either a visible leadership role or a low-key, behind-the-scenes role.
- Look for ways to complement and build on the strengths of others. Avoid, at all costs, entering into unnecessary competition with other groups that could benefit your work as your allies.
- Keep an eye on the target. Do not deviate with side interests or opportunities that don't fit within the organization's objectives. If you do deviate, do so consciously and without losing focus.
- If an organization is composed primarily of business people, examine what's in it for the business sector as a whole and for business people in particular. Recognize that there will be (and probably should be) an element of vested self-interest.
- If the organization is made up of business people, examine what these individuals have to offer to the organization and build on and around their strengths.

We would like to place particular emphasis on the first three bullets in the above box. With regard to the first bullet, a focus on policy reform implies having a clear vision, and acting strategically. The organization's programmatic focus, the composition of its board of directors, the characteristics of the organization's advisory committee, and the characteristics of the executive director will necessarily have to flow from the nature of the policy reform role that the organization decides to take. As EDUCA is currently updating its strategic vision, it is too soon to assess what changes EDUCA will need to make in its board and staff to achieve this vision.

With regard to the second bullet, operating alone – especially in an area such as policy reform – doesn't work. Strength and influence come from unity, especially in a country such as the Dominican Republic where civil society tends to be fragmented. To be effective, organizations such as EDUCA must establish strategic alliances with the Ministry of Education and other civil society organizations seeking the same goals. This was very much the case with EDUCA's involvement in the Plan Decenal. Likewise, it appears that this is the route that EDUCA is planning to take over the next three years.

Regarding the third bullet, contracting out, EDUCA did not have the expertise or the installed structure to launch large director and teacher-training programs on its own. By contracting out to local universities, EDUCA accomplished several objectives:

- (1) It avoided taking on technical and administrative burdens it could never have handled;
- (2) It helped strengthen programs at the universities<sup>46</sup>.
- (3) Finally, by supporting existing groups, EDUCA was able to forge important strategic alliances that it can draw upon for future assistance and support.

On the other hand, EDUCA chose to install and staff an MIS on its own premises. This activity has been time-consuming and complicated to carry out, and it has not provided the results that were anticipated. Maintaining something as complex and labor-intensive as an MIS may not be a wise decision for an institution that wants to maintain a lean staff. It augurs well that EDUCA has decided, under its strategic plan for the years 1998-2001, to continue contracting out.

## **5. *To what extent should groups that are involved in policy advocacy also be involved in service delivery?***

This is a critical question. An important lesson learned from the EDUCA case is that an organization such as EDUCA that seeks to influence policy must, for the sake of credibility, stay involved in service delivery. Businesses and donors like to support concrete services. Beneficiaries need to have definitive ways of seeing that the organization is trying to benefit them.

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<sup>46</sup> In the case of director training, it helped launch a new program that, with luck, will be picked up by the World Bank and the IDB under the current loan with the Ministry of Education.

In the case of the Dominican Republic, EDUCA began with a dual focus involving: 1) increasing government financing for education; and 2) promoting key reforms within the Ministry and the education system in general. Of the two, more emphasis was placed on taking concrete steps to improve the overall education system. EDUCA focused on both policy reform and service delivery for its first two years. However, once the PIPE project began, service delivery activities started assuming a larger role. Implementing PIPE took up a great deal of staff time. It also projected an image to the public at large of an organization that dedicated its efforts to training thousands of school teachers and directors.

The greatest challenge is taking on service delivery activities that are within the organization's capacity and that do not distract the organization from its mission, especially if a major emphasis of its mission is influencing policy reform. EDUCA is conscious of this challenge, and in its programming for the next three years (which has advocacy as its key role) has decided to opt to take on only those service activities that are in support of its advocacy work. EDUCA will not become involved in activities that either do not support it in its advocacy role or that take its attention away from advocacy.

The new EDUCA board has decided, for example, to keep supporting an ongoing activity to work with communities and local firms to support pre-school education and which has potential to serve as a model for a program that the Ministry of Education may take on in the future. It is also contemplating establishing a special award for a newspaper journalist who has done exemplary reporting on the Dominican education system. On the other hand, every effort will be made to interest an outside organization with taking on an activity initiated two years ago by EDUCA: the development of a Dominican dictionary. This activity does not fit within EDUCA's advocacy role. In addition, it has been very costly (in terms of time and resources required) to carry out.

EDUCA and other advocacy organizations like it can help establish models of effective service delivery, they can help break bottlenecks, and they can provide occasional emergency relief (as EDUCA provided through PIPE). This is enough to gain credibility, demonstrate expertise, and get the attention of decision makers in government and the international donor community. In terms of education reform, organizations such as EDUCA can only advocate, provoke, and nudge it along. The objective of EDUCA's service delivery and others akin to it is to make advocacy effective by providing focused technical advice and

leadership in areas of top priority and in helping to ensure that reforms are carried out.

**6. *How can donors support initiatives such as EDUCA and how can they benefit from such initiatives?***

In the case of the Dominican Republic, a major motivation for USAID's support for EDUCA was its frustration with working with the Ministry of Education. USAID wanted to support education in the Dominican Republic. However, attempts to design and implement programs with the Ministry weren't working. EDUCA, composed of business people who were known to USAID, provided an ideal vehicle for USAID to support basic education in the Dominican Republic.

Unfortunately, however, USAID's support was limited to service delivery in the early years of the grant to EDUCA. Rather than focus on service delivery alone, USAID could have done a great deal to help EDUCA with advocacy work. USAID could have provided institutional strengthening in advocacy – including techniques for policy dialogue at the local, district, and national levels – when the Plan Decenal process was at its peak. The scope of USAID's grant to EDUCA was expanded in 1992 to include support for advocacy and social mobilization, but by that time the window of opportunity had closed. What remained to be done was the implementation of a very ambitious reform agenda provoked by the Plan Decenal process.

For other lending institutions that already have ongoing programs with the Ministry of Education, there is a different motivation for supporting an organization such as EDUCA. At the Consultative Group Meeting in Paris in 1993, the World Bank, the IDB, and the European Union pledged over \$100 million to support the implementation of the Plan Decenal through a loan to the Dominican Ministry of Education. The loan, designed in 1995, was put on hold during the waning days of the Balaguer regime. It was ratified by the Fernandez government in the spring of 1997 and is now being implemented. In the interest of putting this loan to effective use, it is very much to the benefit of the World Bank, the IDB, and the EU to enter into a strategic alliance with Dominican civil society to encourage the new government to implement the new General Education Law that resulted from the Plan Decenal.

In the case of the Dominican Republic as well as other countries, organizations such as EDUCA can play a considerable role in mobilizing

civil society to work with donors to help push for critical reforms as well as to ensure that a new educational reform law is implemented as planned.

For a donor that might want to support an organization such as EDUCA – be it to do service delivery in education or carry out advocacy for policy reform – there are a few lessons that arise from the EDUCA experience:

#### **LESSONS LEARNED FOR DONORS**

- If the ultimate objective is sustainability, focus where possible on local initiatives and respect the desires of those who have come up with the initiatives. Avoid thrusting the donor's agenda on the organization.
- If the objective is to help build the capacity of an organization that is in the process of being formed, support the institution in its entirety. Do not limit support to one or more of the organization's programs of specific interest to the donor, leaving other aspects of the organization hanging.
- If the ultimate objective is to support an organization whose key objective is to promote education policy reform, it is important to be flexible. This means supporting the grantee in adapting to changing times and opportunities.

#### **7. *What are the benefits of initiatives such as EDUCA for governments? What are the potential threats?***

There are a number of potential benefits to government in entering into alliances with civil society groups such as EDUCA. One benefit is in-kind assistance for carrying out priority education projects. An example of this is obtaining support from mass media for publicizing topics of high priority to the Ministry of Education and publicizing fora to address key issues of interest to civil society and the Ministry of Education. Another benefit of an initiative like EDUCA is helping to mobilize civil society into participating in a broad consultation (as EDUCA and other organizations did with the Plan Decenal). A third is that such initiatives can provide assistance in implementing key reforms (such as EDUCA did following the approval of the Plan Decenal).

There are also some potential threats. One is that an organization such as EDUCA could potentially divert donor attention and funding from government to itself and other NGOs. If extraordinarily effective, an organization such as EDUCA could become a seat of know-how, prestige, authority, legitimacy, and credibility which makes government

look weak by comparison. Such an organization could also lure qualified technical staff from ministries and control critical national information that ministries of education do not have. Finally, an organization such as EDUCA could establish standards that are unattainable for government (such as high quality textbooks produced at four times the ordinary budget). Clearly, NGOs such as EDUCA – in establishing their mission and image – should try to avoid these potential pitfalls and thus dodge unnecessary friction with government.

### **8. *How does one measure the success of initiatives such as EDUCA's in the area of policy reform?***

There are no simple recipes for measuring the success of organizations such as EDUCA in influencing policy reform. EDUCA and organizations like it are usually one of many groups collaborating in a policy reform effort. Often much of what they are striving to accomplish is out of their direct control. Policy reform is inherently messy. It is also a very political process and it is almost impossible to predict exactly when a policy will be approved and what its exact contents will be.

Nevertheless, there are ways of measuring the success of initiatives such as EDUCA's. Crucial in the process of coming up with indicators is identifying what is within the manageable interest of the organization. Is it realistic to think that the organization will, either alone or in collaboration with others, be able to influence a specific policy reform? If this is the objective, then would simply passing the policy be enough or would it also be important to ensure its implementation? If achieving policy reform is out of the organization's manageable interest, is it realistic to contemplate that the organization will be able to wield significant influence?

Listed below are some indicators that can be applied depending on what the ultimate objective is.



**INDICATORS OF SUCCESS  
IN THE EDUCATION POLICY REFORM ARENA**

***Civil society is achieving a 'seat at the table'.***

- Civil society provides input into key reforms (either as a result of government actively consulting with civil society or civil society lobbying government).
- Civil society actively expresses its views on significant education topics in mass media (newspaper, television, radio).
- Civil society is invited to participate in important conferences and fora where key education topics are addressed.
- Strategic alliances and coalitions actively champion critical education reforms.

***Civil society is credited with contributing to the achievement of reform targets.***

- Key reforms championed by civil society are approved.
- Key reforms championed by civil society are successfully implemented.
- Civil society plays a deciding role in influencing the education platforms of presidential candidates.
- Civil society plays a deciding role in influencing the selection of the minister of education and his/her top appointees.
  - Civil society actively supports the minister of education in achieving his/her objectives.
  - As necessary, civil society is influential (if the minister is not performing) in replacing the minister of education

## **9. *How can efforts such as these be sustained?***

This is probably *the* most important challenge for an organization such as EDUCA, especially if it chooses as its top priority advocacy for reform. The organization must have a stable income that will permit it to be an active participant in the reform process. This income needs to come without strings attached. Most donors usually want to see specific products and may have their own reform agendas. Often, this will guide the funding they offer to the institution.

The ideal situation is one in which the organization has its own independent source of funding<sup>47</sup> that comes with no strings and permits it to follow its priorities. It also helps to have a diversified funding base, with funding coming in some instances from outside donors and in others from businesses and other contributors within the country.

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<sup>47</sup> For example, donations from local businesses, an endowment.

As EDUCA moves away from a major reliance on USAID for funding<sup>48</sup>, it is attempting to come up with other sources of support. Since early March 1998, EDUCA has been operating with a staff of nine on a budget of \$10,000 per month<sup>49</sup>. In addition, EDUCA is in the process of exploring a variety of sources of financial support for specific programs, among them: (1) establishing an endowment fund through various donations; and (2) specific programs financed by the Inter-American Foundation, Inter-American Dialogue, USAID, and some foundations in the Dominican Republic.

A major challenge that EDUCA and similar organizations face in attempting to achieve financial sustainability is to avoid the temptation to seek out or offer to implement activities that fall outside of its mission. This means that organizations such as EDUCA, as they seek funding, need to be clear on what their mission is, how they propose to achieve it, and how external funding will help them to achieve it. Ideally, from their inception, such organizations should have a clearly thought out long-term strategy for how they are going to raise the funds they need to operate.

If an offer for external funding for a specific program falls outside of the organization's area of focus or expertise, the organization must think twice before accepting it, as the program may be very time-consuming to carry out and could distract the organization from what it really wants to accomplish. In sum, the organization must act strategically and think clearly about how it will accomplish its objectives.

Of course, if there is no longer a role for the organization, it is not outside the realm of possibility that it might be time for the organization to cease to exist. During the EDUCA evaluation, all interviewees were asked if this shouldn't be a possible option for EDUCA. In the case of EDUCA, the answer was a resounding 'no'.

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<sup>48</sup> USAID funding between 1990 and 1997 covered the majority of EDUCA's operating expenses and most of its projects.

<sup>49</sup> Most of this money is raised from dues from private sector individuals and firms and other Dominican private sector contributions.

## VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Supporting reform from the outside is not easy, even if you are a wealthy business person. Some governments welcome the support and involvement of civil society; others do not. Some education ministers are receptive to private sector support; others are not. Priority for education comes and goes depending on the government in power.

Rafael Toribio – a key actor in Plan Educativo, the national coordinator of the Plan Decenal, and a member of EDUCA’s advisory group – is cautiously optimistic that the direction EDUCA has recently decided to take is the right one:

*“Much will depend on the capacity of the new board of directors. The recent formulation of EDUCA’s strategy for 1998-2001 is correct. The vision and strategic definition coincide with the changes that have taken place in the education system and in the Ministry of Education. They also coincide with EDUCA’s strengths. Much will depend on EDUCA’s capacity to put this vision into execution. EDUCA’s new team has this capacity.”*

However, civil society involvement in pushing for policy reform is still relatively new in the Dominican Republic. The current government transmits mixed signals as to whether it wants the support of civil society and what kind of support it wants. Education is high on the current government’s agenda, but where will it fall on the next government’s agenda?

To the above, Gustavo Tavares, one of EDUCA’s founders and its first president, and George Arzeno Brugal, EDUCA’s recently elected president, both observe:

*“The fact is that in countries like the Dominican Republic, governments come and go, while civil society stays. Civil society, therefore, has the obligation to ensure continuity, especially in an area as critical to a country’s development as education.”*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This study of EDUCA would not have happened had we not received the wholehearted support of many people in the Dominican Republic and elsewhere. In the Dominican Republic, we extend our gratitude to the executive director of EDUCA, Aida Consuelo Hernandez, and her staff for their patience in answering endless questions, sharing all of their material with us, and carefully reviewing the study in its various drafts. Special thanks are also in order to EDUCA's board of directors and advisors for the many hours they made available to us for being interviewed and for reviewing the drafts of the study. Quotes from a number of these individuals appear in the text of the study. Our special thanks also to the USAID/Dominican Republic staff who both financed this study and who gave us their full support throughout the process – Leo Garza, Deputy Mission Director; Brian Rudert, Chief of the Economic Growth Strategic Objective Team; Soraya Morillo and Fanny Jorge of the contracts staff.

We were very fortunate to get a number of prominent educators to agree to review earlier drafts of this study. Their comments and suggestions were invaluable in improving the quality of the final document. Our thanks in particular to a group of educators who have extensive experience working in the area of education policy reform in Latin America and elsewhere: Ernesto Schefelbein, Fernando Reimers, Gustavo Arcia, Ray Chesterfield, Ash Hartwell, Joseph DeStefano, Nick Mills, and Carleton Corrales. Emily Vargas-Baron, David Evans, Marco Tulio Mejia, and Ned Van Steenwyck of USAID and Katherine Taylor of the Inter-American Development Bank also provided excellent suggestions for improving the content of the document. Leonel Bendeck and Ricardo Maduro, the executive directors of the businessmen's associations CADERH and FEREMA, were also kind enough to review and comment on an earlier draft of the study. Fausto Segovia, former minister of education in Ecuador and Diana Gonzales, an independent consultant who led teams that designed and evaluated USAID's funding for EDUCA under the Private Initiatives in Primary Education (PIPE) project, also provided valuable feedback.

## [BACK INSIDE COVER]

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SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

PRODUCED BY: CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC.  
WASHINGTON, DC



OCTOBER, 1998



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